



**Responsible Office:** Office of Accountability

**BOARD POLICY 9090**  
**STUDENT PERFORMANCE GROWTH**

**PURPOSE**

The vision for the Washoe County School District (District) is for every child to graduate college and highly-skilled career ready. To achieve this vision, persistent gaps in learning between student groups must be closed. Moreover, the District's schools must reach high standards of excellence that can only be accomplished through a central focus on our core business, teaching and learning. Similarly, the primary focus of central services must be to support schools in carrying out this core function.

Milestones identified in the District's Strategic Plan serve to establish the system-wide performance expectations. To fulfill our promise to our students we must hold ourselves jointly accountable for reaching our agreed to performance expectations. And as a system we must celebrate when we are successful in this endeavor and we must take corrective action when we are less than successful.

**POLICY**

1. Definition

- a. A Student Performance Growth system must provide a tool to objectively guide the Board of Trustees and District administration in their decision making responsibilities. Based on clear expectations for performance, data from multiple sources is collected and analyzed. Findings from the analysis are reported and lead to action. The Student Performance Growth system is no replacement for professional responsibility, but it is a signal to the entire educational community that the Board is serious about ensuring that the needs for all students are met.
- b. Performance expectations fueling the system must pertain to the district as a whole, district divisions, schools, administrators, teachers, and students. Performance indicators must include, but are not necessarily limited to, those identified as part of the Strategic goals and initiatives to achieve those goals.

The selected indicators reflect the values of the Board and the educational community.

## 2. Accountability Principles

- a. The Student Performance Growth system is based on the following principles:
  - i. The primary purpose of a Student Performance Growth system is to identify system strengths and weaknesses so that appropriate action can be taken.
  - ii. The Student Performance Growth system should be comprehensive, contextual, and easily understood.
  - iii. Schools are the primary units of measuring student performance growth. Schools must be held accountable for the performance growth of all students as well as the performance growth of student subgroups.
  - iv. School performance growth must be aligned with principal and teacher evaluation systems.
  - v. Student learning must be the dominant measure of school performance. Multiple and varied metrics should be included to accurately represent school performance and to stimulate attention to critical contextual variables.
  - vi. Student growth, student proficiency, and trends over time should be measured to determine student learning.
  - vii. School culture/climate, student, teacher, and family engagement, and school leadership shall be measured and included in accountability decisions affecting schools.
  - viii. All departments and offices in the district should be held accountable for their performance and the support they provide to schools.

## 3. Student Performance Growth Indicators

- a. Performance growth expectations should include, but are not necessarily limited to, those identified as part of the Strategic Plan and the foundation to the academic pathway. As a result, different sets of indicators may comprise the evaluation of elementary school, middle school, and high

school performance. Because college and highly-skilled career readiness is an overarching goal at every grade level, it is critical to consider the inclusion of performance indicators that bridge the vertical alignment of grade levels. Hence, performance in middle school years may be used as part of the elementary evaluation, performance in high school may be used as part of the middle school evaluation, and performance in post-secondary institutions may be used in evaluating high schools.

- b. Indicators reflecting year-end expectations must be included in the system. However, leading indicators must also be identified. Formative indicators refer to measures that can be taken intermittently throughout the school year as progress toward year-end expectations is made.
- c. Student Learning Indicators
  - i. State Assessments
  - ii. District Wide Assessments
  - iii. College Readiness Assessments
  - iv. Graduation Progress (on-time, extended, alternative)
  - v. Dropout, Credit Attainment and College Remediation rates
- d. Depending on the student achievement indicator in question, data yielded from the indicators will be used to estimate:
  - i. Absolute proficiency
  - ii. Improvement in proficiency rates
  - iii. Student growth
- e. Foundational Indicators
  - i. School Climate
    - 1. Shared Leadership
    - 2. Student, parent, community, and staff perceptions
  - ii. Student Behavior
    - 1. Attendance
    - 2. Positive Behavioral Referrals
    - 3. Suspensions/Expulsions

4. Disciplinary Referrals
  5. Performance in Extracurricular Activities
  6. School and Community Service
- iii. Family Engagement
- f. Department Level Key Performance Indicators
    - i. Support responsiveness
    - ii. Customer satisfaction
4. School Growth Classification
    - a. Schools will be classified along a continuum of effectiveness/quality using information from multiple measures related to student achievement and school quality. The system should differentially weight various indicators contributing to a school's classification.
    - b. Weighting indicators may contribute to a quantitatively scaled index. Index scores can then be compared against pre-established standards of performance that signify levels of classification (school status). Year to year changes in index values can also be used to establish overall school improvement over time (school progress).
    - c. Working from the indexed values, schools can receive annual status and progress classifications. School designations should signify a relatively persistent school quality or characteristic. This means that multiple years of classification should be used to recognize outstanding performance, or by contrast low performance. Similarly, multiple years of classification should be used, if necessary, to remove such a designation once earned. The rubric-driven designations should characterize schools based on the various indicators used within the system.
5. Consequences
    - a. The classifications and designations must not simply be labels carrying intended or unintended value implications, but they must inform the system and participants in meaningful ways. The system must lead to action. Positive consequences as well as sanctions must be designed to motivate progress and change. The differentiation of consequences at the systems level should be similar in nature to the differentiation of instruction, intervention, and enrichment within the classroom, the differentiation in

support offered to teachers from administrators, and the differentiation of support offered to principals from central office.

- b. Additionally, consequences of the system must circle back to the Board's Theory of Action, Managed Performance Empowerment. Exemplary performance should be rewarded and lead to increasing levels of school autonomy. Performance indicative of *Less than Expected Progress* should lead to greater district management of site-based decisions. Both autonomy as well as corrective action should be tiered taking into consideration sustainability of high performance and persistence of low performance. Schools may be placed in a position based on performance to request autonomous action through articulation of a plan.
- c. The consequences, both positive and negative, apply equally to central office as they do to schools. For example, central office must actively learn from high achieving schools. It must identify those practices that seem to be contributing to the positive outcomes as well as those that are producing negative results.
- d. For schools not performing to expectations, central office must provide comprehensive and relevant support. Central office cannot manage instruction unless it can deliver structures and professional support for those structures enabling schools to carry out district directives.
- e. As noted, the school is the central unit being considered within the accountability system. Therefore, generally speaking consequences accruing from accountability results are coupled with the building as a whole.

## 6. Reporting

- a. The school district staff are accountable to students; to parents; to the community; and to one another as fellow educators. Clear and transparent information should be provided, when appropriate, in both digital and paper formats as well as in multiple languages.
- b. Parents need to have timely information available regarding the performance of other schools where they may choose to enroll their children and the implications of making such a choice (e.g., transportation, sports involvement).

- c. Information should be gathered and reported cyclically throughout the year, prior to year-end expectations. This would include communication to multiple audiences with year-end summaries of performance that carry school classifications and designations (e.g., scorecards) as well as intermittent reports of leading indicators or relevant information pertaining to progress toward reaching year-end expectations (e.g., dashboards). The District must meet its responsibility to communicate clearly to multiple stakeholders using the cycle of reporting.
  - d. Principals must be able to learn from the information in order to plan for change and to make midcourse corrections as needed throughout a school year and parents need clear information that better enables them to engage meaningfully in the school environment to partner and support the academic development of their children.
8. Evaluation
- a. In addition to public and internal reporting of accountability findings, the student performance growth system should be evaluated annually. The evaluation should include 1) an analysis of the range of performance growth among schools, 2) consistency in performance growth among schools, 3) and an analysis of the individual component indicators used in the comprehensive analysis. The evaluation should include a qualitative review with data from the perspective of principals, parents, and community members. Information collected from these constituent groups should focus on qualities of the system that are perceived to be positive as well as qualities perceived to be negative. Once the system is established, revisions to the evaluation process should be considered.
  - b. When applicable, an external independent review of the system should be considered. This should include an audit of the mechanics of the system as well as a comparison of the system to benchmark school districts with like student characteristics.
  - c. A synthesis of this quantitative and qualitative information should be used to inform recommendations made to the Board regarding possible revisions to the system. The evaluation and recommendations should be presented to the Board in the form of a written report delivered at a Board work session.

## **IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

1. This policy reflects the goals of the District’s Strategic Plan and aligns to the governing documents of the District.
2. This policy aligns with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC), to include:
  - a. NRS Chapter 385, State Administrative Organization
    - i. NRS 385.3469 – 385.3593, Annual Reports of Accountability Information; Plans to Improve the Achievement of Pupils
    - ii. NRS 385.3594 – 385.391, Adoption of Growth Model For Schools; Inclusion of Certain Pupils Within Statewide System of Accountability; Annual Ratings of Public Schools; Duties of Department
  - b. NRS Chapter 386, Local Administrative Organization
    - i. NRS 386.650 – 386.655, Automated System of Accountability Information for Nevada

## **REVIEW AND REPORTING**

1. This policy shall be reviewed on a bi-annual basis as part of the policy review process.

## **REVISION HISTORY**

Date	Revision	Modification
7/26/2011	1.0	Adopted
7/24/2012		Reviewed by the Board of Trustees during Work Session
6/17/2014	1.1	Updated NRS citations
10/25/2016	2.0	Revised: Changed from Board Policy 9030, Accountability